

DRAFT

STATEMENT OF GOVERNOR HALEY BARBOUR

Wednesday, July 3, 2008

The Mississippi House of Representatives has shown a callous disregard for a vital state health care program by again going home without finishing the job of passing a fair, permanent, sustainable solution to Medicaid's funding shortfall. The people of Mississippi are underwhelmed by the House's appalling lack of action, which puts in jeopardy 5,000 jobs at hospitals and other health care facilities.

A real solution, one that will strengthen Medicaid and preserve it for some of our state's neediest citizens, has been on the table for days now in the current Special Session. The Mississippi Senate passed it on an overwhelming, bipartisan vote of 41-to-7; yet, again, the House had closed its doors, packed its bags, and gone home without passing it.

The House leadership's refusal to deal with Medicaid funding is like the ostrich that puts his head in the sand, hoping to ignore reality and hoping the crisis will pass while he blinds himself to reality. In fact, while the House wears blinders, the crisis grows into a very dangerous, unfortunate threat to the quality of health care in Mississippi.